

Your new sod is a **living, perishable product**. What you do in the first two weeks decides whether it roots into a thick, healthy lawn — or dries out. The single most important factor in sod survival is **watering**. Follow the three rules below and the schedule on this page.



1. Keep It Wet

Water heavily right after install and keep the soil consistently moist (not soggy) — especially the first two weeks.



2. Stay Off It

No foot traffic for the first 2 weeks while roots anchor. Walking on new sod shifts the pieces and leaves gaps.



3. Don't Mow Yet

Wait 2–3 weeks until the sod has rooted before the first cut. Same for fertilizer — hold off (see page 2).

1 Watering schedule — the #1 factor

Start watering **as soon as the first row is laid**. Water **deeply and evenly** so it soaks in without running off. Early morning is best. Follow this schedule, then adjust for rain and heat:

Timeframe	How often	Per session	Goal
Week 1-2	2-3x daily	15-20 min	Soil consistently moist, never soggy. AM / midday / late afternoon.
Week 3-4	Once daily	20-30 min	Sod is rooting — gently tug a corner; if it resists, roots are taking.
Week 5-6	Every other day	30-40 min	Deeper, less frequent — pushes roots down into the soil.
Week 7+	2-3x / week	30-45 min	~1" of water per week total. Your lawn is established!

The finger test: push a finger into the soil beside the sod. If it's dry below the surface, water more. In hot spells (July–August) new sod may need water 2–3 times a day — don't let it dry out even once.

2 While it roots — the "don'ts"

- ✗ **Don't walk on it.** Keep people, pets and equipment off the new sod for ~2 weeks — foot traffic (especially on wet sod) shifts pieces and leaves gaps and depressions.
- ✗ **Don't mow for 2-3 weeks.** Let the roots anchor first.
- ✗ **Don't fertilize yet.** We apply starter fertilizer at installation (where included) — hold your own for 4–6 weeks (see page 2).
- ✗ **Don't let it dry out.** Even one hot, dry day can set back or kill new sod. When in doubt, water.

3 Your first mow & mowing after that

- ✓ **Wait 2-3 weeks** until the sod has rooted before the first cut.
- ✓ **Never mow soggy ground** — it tears the sod and leaves ruts.
- ✓ **Never remove more than 1/3** of the blade height in one mow.
- ✓ Keep the mower blade sharp for a clean cut, not a torn one.

First-mow height

Kentucky Bluegrass	3.5-4"
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Set the mower to its **highest setting** for the first few cuts. Taller grass shades out weeds and holds moisture — the easiest path to a dense, healthy lawn.

4 Feeding — hold off at first

- ✓ We apply a starter fertilizer at installation (where included) — don't add your own for 4-6 weeks, as early feeding can **burn the new roots**.
- ✓ When you do feed, **always water the fertilizer in** — never apply to wet blades in extreme heat.
- ✓ Always follow the rate on the bag — too much fertilizer damages the lawn.

5 Watch for seams

- ✓ If seams separate slightly as the sod settles, **push the pieces back together** and fill any gaps with a little topsoil.
- ✓ **Water the area thoroughly** afterward to help the edges knit together.

Quick recap: Water heavily weeks 1-2 (2-3x/day) → taper over weeks 3-6 → first mow at 2-3 weeks (highest setting, never soggy) → hold fertilizer 4-6 weeks. Keep off the sod while it's rooting.

Seeing brown patches or dry spots? In the first few weeks it's almost always a watering-coverage issue. Give thin or dry areas extra water and make sure your sprinkler reaches the edges and corners. If it doesn't green up, get in touch.